Yesterday went out at about two. Went to Albert's.

His wife opens the door, shouts from the bottom of the stairs leading to the studio: "Papa! it's Andre," then goes upstairs with me and settles down in our conversation, in our intimacy, which she hinders, which she makes impossible. And all during the two hours I stay, she doesn't budge once. It's this way *every time* I go to see Albert. With her there, we talk about almost everything that we would talk about without her . . . but not in the same way.

And I feel that Albert is fed up with this. Timidly, giving some excuse or other, he accompanies me into the hall, then onto the landing, and whispers as he leans toward me: *I can never be alone any more/* and I see an old man's big tears, which he hastens to rub away.

When both of them came to Auteuil, Em. taking charge of his wife, I had been able to remain alone with him for some time. Then it was that he repeated the heartbreaking sentence with which his father's will ended: "My dear children, above all don't have any ambition." And Albert added lugubriously: **He knew that we were not up to it.**

And I wonder what a come-down Albert's father had made too when, toward the end of his life, he used to weep silently in the evening, with his back turned to the lamp, while his wrfe, beside him, read the newspaper or embroidered and Albert, out of respect for his father, pretended not to see.

*SMay*

Through excessive turbulence, I cannot succeed in imposing a method on myself, not that I am unwilling to submit to it, but my body constantly revolts against what my mind proposes.

What is the good of my resolution to get up at dawn when I haven't been able to sleep all night? or to stay up late when I can't keep ray eyes open? I am forced to fool myself and to take advantage of the

good moments as they come.

Finished Paul Desjardins's study of Corneille. Excellent A trifle long.

Em. was to leave for Cuverville yesterday; but I felt so bad that I asked her to put off her departure one day. After lunch, taking advantage of the sudden soft weather, we went out into the Bois de Boulogne and, skirting the embankment of the fortifications, reached La Muette and the avenue Henri-Martin. Went up for a moment to call on Aunt Charles; Gerard had warmly proposed coming and keeping me company during Em.'s absence; I had to tell him, as decently as I could, that I preferred solitude.

Worked in desultory fashion until dinner.

After dinner, read to Em* the first few pages of *La Porte &rotte.* Certainly the description of the garden is good—but the rest of it . . . 9